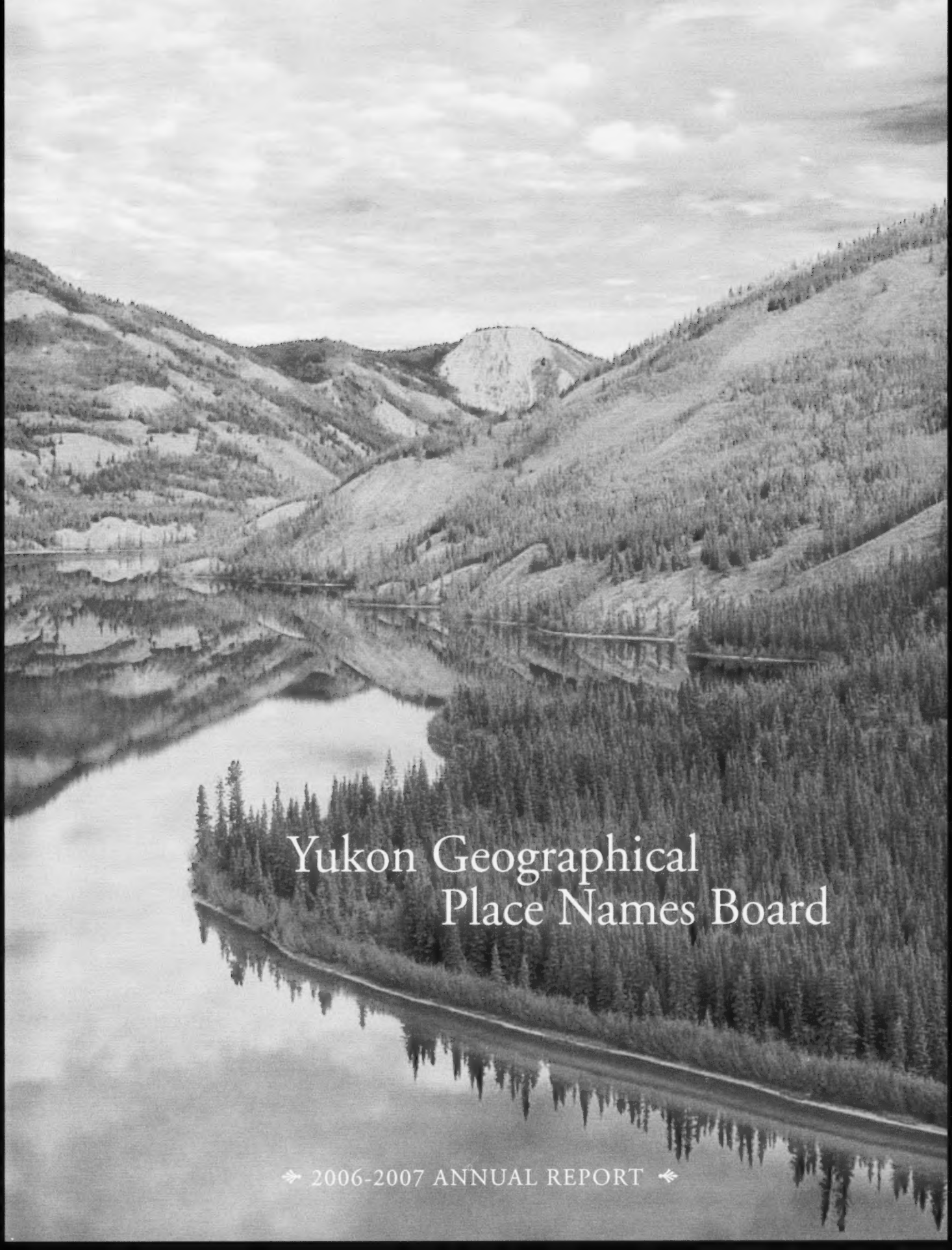


Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

2006-2007 ANNUAL REPORT

COFFEE CREEK

Coffee Creek village site on the Yukon River, located just above the mouth of the White River. During the era of steamboats, there was a village here with a number of year-round Northern Tutchone as well as non-native individuals and families. A native trail led from Coffee Creek south to K'elt'a Mān (Lilypad Lake) and the Donjek River.

The names of places reflect the Yukon's diverse culture, history, and landscape. Names such as Aishihik, Kusawa, and Tuchitua, are just a few of the native names found on a modern map of the Yukon. Yukon First Nations named rivers, mountains, lakes and landmarks long before the first non-native explorers and settlers arrived in the territory. Names such as Gyò Cho Chú (Big Salmon River) tell where animals and fish are plentiful. Other names, such as Thechâl Män (Sekulman Lake), 'Stone Scraper for Hides' describe artifacts, people and events. Today's Yukon First Nations still remember these names and are working to record them for future generations.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, explorers, fur traders, and prospectors came to the Yukon to trade with native people, search for gold, and explore the vast landscape, giving their own names to the land. The Danish explorer Vitus Bering was the first non-native to name a geographical feature in northwest America. Bering had entered the newly formed navy of the Russian tsar Peter the Great and in 1724 was appointed to conduct an expedition to explore the water routes between Siberia and North America. In 1741, Bering named an island lying off the coast in the proximity of a very prominent mountain. He anchored near the island on St. Elias' feast day and named the island for the saint. The dominant mountain in question was, later in the eighteenth century, given the name of the island and Mount St. Elias became one of several peaks that define the border between Canada's Yukon and the American State of Alaska.

While Bering and explorers to follow gave names to geographical features without asking the local names for places, others, such as geologist George Dawson and the Yukon's first Commissioner, William Ogilvie, recorded many native names during their years in the Yukon, including the Yuseżyu and Tatchun Rivers in central Yukon.

Many of the official names on the Yukon map today were given by non-native settlers who came to the Yukon during the Gold Rush period of the 1890s. In the area around Dawson City, Allgold, Bonanza, Eureka, and Nogold recall the successes - and failures - of the miners who came to the territory during the Klondike Gold Rush. Names such as Carcross (from Caribou Crossing), Fox Lake, and Eagle's Nest Bluff, testify to the richness of Yukon's wildlife resources. Other places, such as Five Finger Rapids on the Yukon River, Blackstone Mountain, and White River, were named for the shape, colour, and form of the land and water itself. One of the best known names of this type is Whitehorse, which took its name from the White Horse Rapids, whose foamy white crests reminded early prospectors of horses' manes. Another legend tells of a chief's white horse drowning there.

CLAIRE LAKE *(from cover)*

The Northern Tutchone name for this lake is Deyę, with no English translation because of its antiquity. It is one of several fishing lakes utilized traditionally by people from Big Salmon and Little Salmon villages. The English name, Claire Lake, is believed to derive from the name of a prospector who was reported to be in the region in the early 1900s.

The Origin of the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board*

In 1897, Canada established the *Geographic Board of Canada,* whose mandate was to approve official place names across the country. Interestingly, one of the motivations for establishing this board came from events happening in the Yukon, from the discovery of gold in the Klondike. Today, the successor to this Board is known as the *Geographical Names Board of Canada* (GNBC) which until recently was referred to as the *Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names* (CPCGN). The GNBC is made up of 23 members representing the provinces and territories, as well as federal departments that deal with surveying, mapping, translation, archives, parks, and native affairs.

In 1986, the responsibility for naming geographical features in the Yukon was transferred from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to the Government of Yukon, putting geographical naming in the hands of Yukon residents for the first time. As part of this transfer the Government of Yukon established the *Yukon Geographical Names Board* (YGNB) in 1987 to undertake the job of researching and approving geographical names.

In 1995, under the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, the *Yukon Geographical Names Board* was replaced by the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board* (YGPNB).

The Board's Responsibilities

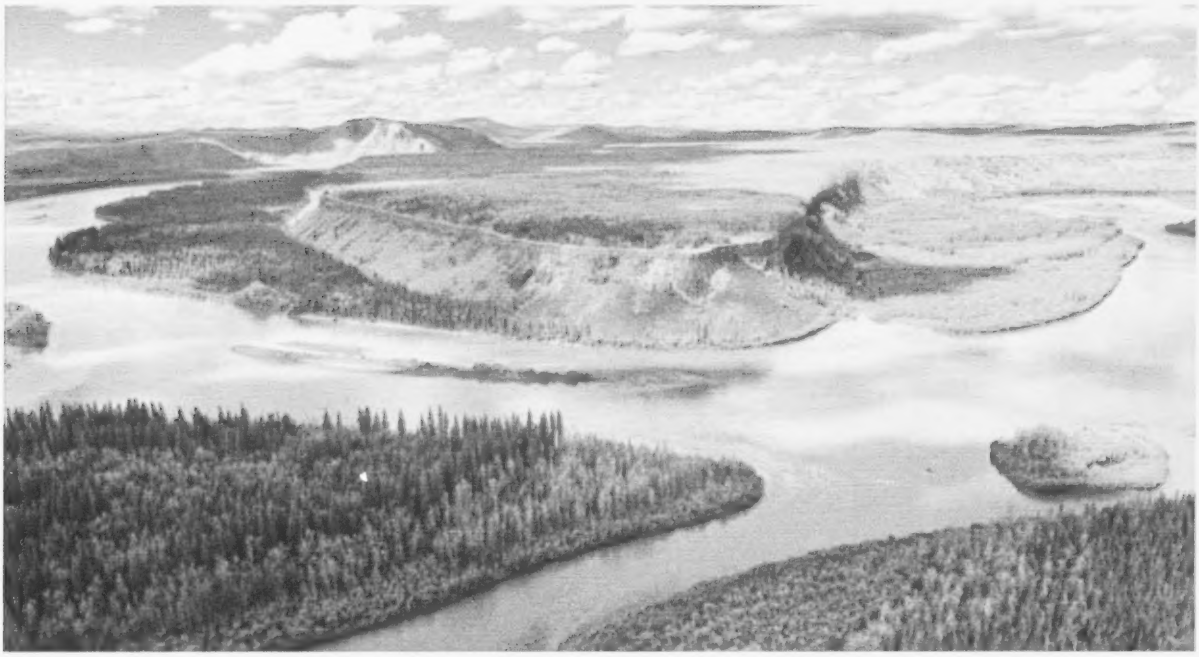
The *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board* (YGPNB) is constituted under the *Umbrella Final Agreement* (UFA), signed by the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN), the Yukon Government and the Government of Canada. The Board's primary function is to consider and recommend the naming or renaming of places or features located within the Yukon with special reference to Chapter 13, Section 11 of the UFA. The Board's mandate does not include the naming/renaming of features or sites within municipal boundaries or of transportation corridors (highways and bridges).

Board Members

The Board is comprised of six Yukoners who share a common interest in developing place name policies that address all Yukoners. Three members are nominated by the Yukon Government and three by the Council of Yukon First Nations, and all serve three-year terms.

PELLY - YUKON *(below)*

Junction of the Pelly River (right) and the Yukon River, an area traditionally used by members of the Selkirk First Nation. The wide basalt bluff in the foreground is known as both Mäk Lé and Mälé in Northern Tutchone, and was noted in the journals of the early explorer Robert Campbell, who established the first Fort Selkirk at this location.



Board Member Profiles

- **John Ritter:** Mr. Ritter has served the Board for four consecutive terms. He is also Director of the Yukon Native Language Centre. As a linguist, his contribution to the spelling and pronunciation of native place names is invaluable. Also crucial to the place name application process is his ability to provide the Board with translation services during consultation periods held with native elders.

- **Robert Lee Jackson:** Mr. Jackson has served the Board since 2004. He has worked for Yukon First Nations for over two decades. Prior to that, he worked for the Highways Department for four seasons with Yukon Lands and Forests. Mr. Jackson also serves on the national Elder's Council and the Residential School Working Group.

- **Paul Birckel:** Mr. Birckel was involved for many years in First Nation governance and administration. He has served as Executive Director of the Council for Yukon Indians and as Chief of the Champagne-Aishihik First Nation. His distinguished record in aboriginal business was recognized in 1995 by the Yukon Chamber of Commerce. In 2000, he was the recipient of a National Aboriginal Achievement Award. He was first appointed to the Board in 2005.

- **Monty Alford:** Mr. Alford is a retired federal hydrographer who has lived in the Yukon for over 50 years. Mr. Alford was first appointed to the Board in 2003. With mountaineering as his avocation, he is familiar not only with the waterways of the Yukon but also with many of the mountain ranges. It is this familiarity with the overall geography of the Yukon that allows him to contribute to the work of the Board. Mr. Alford is the author of five books. He is a Member of the Order of Canada and a holder of the Queen's Medal.

- **Polly Thorp:** Ms. Thorp was first appointed to the Board in 2004. She has lived in the north for more than 25 years and she moved to Whitehorse in 2003. She has a degree in Native Studies from Trent University and a diploma from Yukon College. This education has helped her gain a solid understanding of northern cultures and issues. She is an avid hiker, trail runner and cross-country skier. She brings to the Board a keen interest in Yukon and northern landscape, history and culture.

- **Deana Lemke:** Ms. Lemke was contracted by the Board during the 2006-2007 fiscal year to provide administrative and secretariat support for its activities. Ms. Lemke is the proprietor of Beyond Words Business Services and has extensive experience in board functioning and financial management.

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board: *Deana Lemke (Secretariat to the Board), Monty Alford, Tracy Rispin (appointed in 2007), Robert Lee Jackson (Co-Chair), Polly Thorp, Paul Birckel, John Ritter (Co-Chair).*

DLÙLŪ

Dlùlū is the Northern Tutchone name for this lake, one of a series of important fishing lakes in the region traditionally utilized by members of the present-day Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation in Carmacks, Yukon.

Yukon's Place Name Review Process

Initially, place name applications are submitted to the Yukon Government's *Heritage Resources Unit*, a component of Cultural Services Branch within the Department of Tourism & Culture.

Once place name applications have been received by the Yukon Government, the Yukon Toponymist is assigned with the task of establishing correct locations of proposed place name sites, ensuring that the correct spellings have been recorded on applications and verifying the reasons for place name requests. This helps to ensure that the proposed place name features are accurately located by latitude and longitude and that place names' meaning, spelling and cultural significance have been properly documented. Once the information provided on applications has been confirmed by Yukon Government staff, the applications are forwarded to the Board for review and consideration in the naming or renaming process. If the applications are considered to have merit, they are recommended to the Minister of Tourism & Culture for approval.

Processing place name applications in a timely manner is a priority of the Board. However, the speed with which place name applications are processed is dependent on a number of factors that include:

- completeness of the applications when initially submitted to the Heritage Resources Unit;
- whether the place name sites are on First Nation traditional or settlement lands, or on federal or territorial lands;
- whether the sites identified are located within parks;
- whether the locations of the sites have been accurately determined;
- whether the historical or cultural backgrounds have been given.

The status of individual place name applications is tracked by means of a *Geographical Place Names Application Process Flow Sheet (See Figure 1).*

LITTLE SALMON *(right)*

Little Salmon Village is located on the Yukon River just below the mouth of the Little Salmon River. The mountain in the background is known in Northern Tuchone as Srätthégän Ddhäl, 'Dried Bear Head Mountain.' Little Salmon Village is used seasonally by members of the Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation.

Umbrella Final Agreement direction to the Board

The Umbrella Final Agreement directs the Board in its review of place name applications as follows:

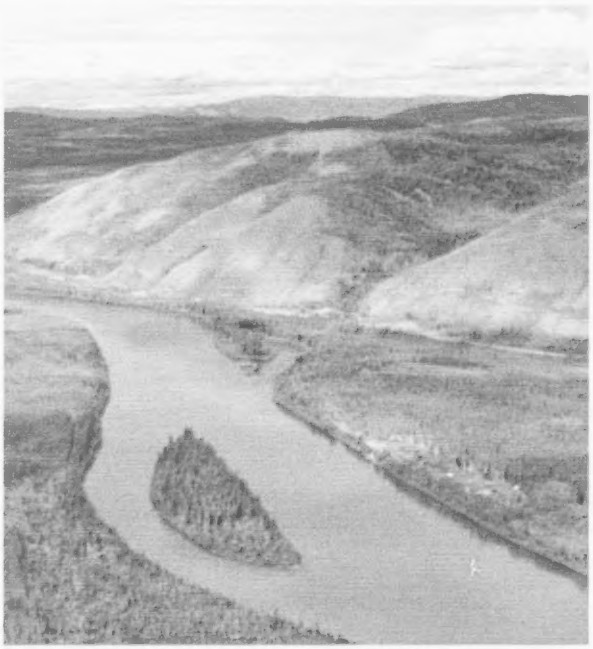
• Section 13.11.2: "When considering the naming or renaming of places or features located within the Traditional Territory of a Yukon First Nation, or when acting with a federal agency where joint jurisdiction over the naming of the place or feature exists, the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board* shall consult with that Yukon First Nation or federal agency."

• Section 13.11.3: "A Yukon First Nation may name or rename places or geographical features on Settlement Land and such place names shall be deemed to be approved by the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board*."

• Section 13.11.4: "Traditional aboriginal place names shall be included, to the extent practicable and in accordance with map production specifications of Canada, on revised maps of the National Topographic System."

ROCK IN WATER *(right)*

Tthi Chum'é is the descriptive Northern Tutchone name for this feature, literally 'rock' (tthi) 'sits in the water' (chum'é). The Tacho mountains are visible in the background. This stretch of the Yukon River is located just downstream from Big Salmon Village.



Assessment Criteria for Place Name Applications

Under the established review process, place name applications submitted are first reviewed by the Yukon Toponymist who confirms each application's accuracy and completeness. The Yukon Toponymist then forwards the application to the Board.

The Board uses the following guidelines to assess applications:

1. First priority shall be given to names with long-standing local usage by the general public, particularly indigenous names in the local native language.

2. The Board has no jurisdiction over the names of parks, territorial divisions or other legal bodies that have been created by, or result from, legislation.

3. Names of rivers, lakes, creeks, and other physical features shall be used for the entire feature. For example, the Yukon River has one name for its entire length, although it is visible from many locations such as Whitehorse, Carmacks, Ft. Selkirk and Dawson City.

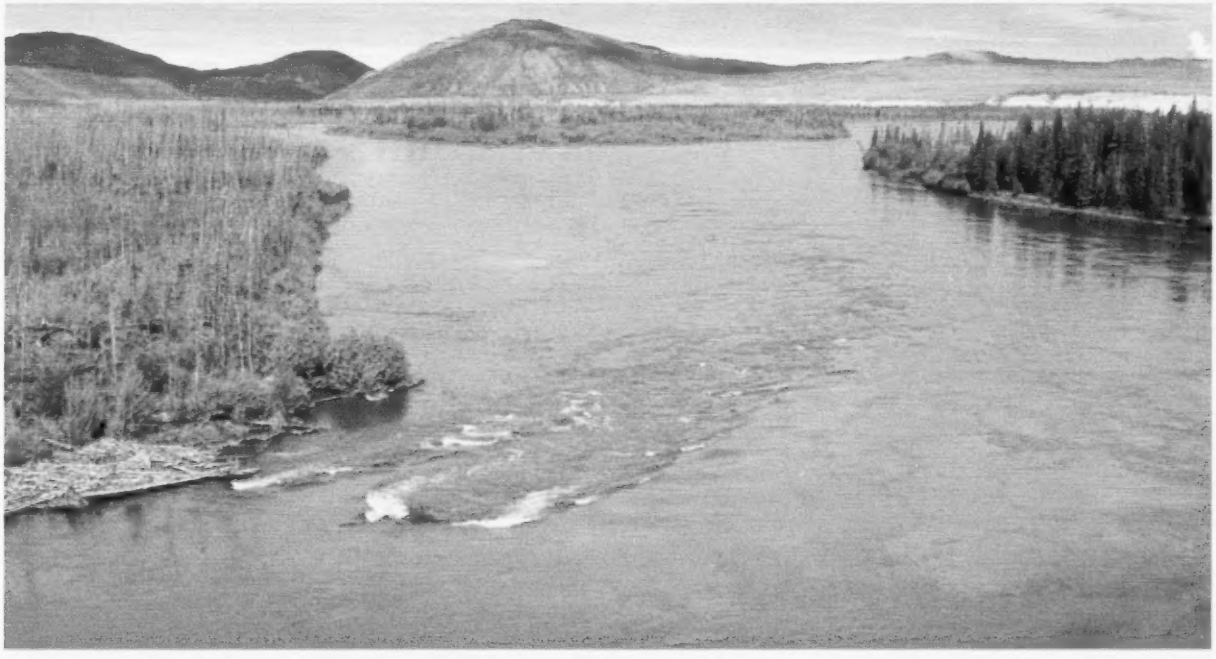
4. Proposals to name a place or geographical feature after a specific person shall show that the person to be commemorated has contributed significantly to the area where the feature is located. In most cases, personal names may be given to geographical features only after the person's death.

5. When proposing names for previously unnamed features, those for which no local names exist, preference shall be given to names from native languages, names that describe the feature, names associated with historical events, and the names of people who have made an important contribution to the area where the place name is proposed.

6. Names shall be recognizable words or acceptable combinations of words, and shall be in good taste. Names that are discriminatory or derogatory from the point of view of race, sex, colour, creed or political affiliation shall not be accepted.

7. The spelling and accenting of names shall agree with the rules of the language in which they were written.

8. The Board has no jurisdiction over the assignment of names within municipalities, parks, territorial divisions, or other legal bodies that have been created by, or result from, legislation. Proposals for name changes within a national park are subject to federal review and approval. When geographical features are wholly or partly located within a national park, names and name changes proposals are to be referred directly through the *Geographic Names Board of Canada* (GNBC).



Summary of Board Activities During 2006-2007 Fiscal Period

During the 2006-2007 fiscal year period the Board carried out a variety of tasks that included:

a) Board Meetings

The Board held one meeting, on November 17, 2006, in Whitehorse.

b) Review of Place Name Applications

The following place name applications remain to be reviewed:

Applicant	Applications to be Reviewed	Year Submitted
Champagne/Aishihik First Nation	3	1992
Teslin Tlingit Council	44	1988 - 1993
Little Salmon/ Carmacks First Nation	19	2002
Miscellaneous	15	1986 - 2003
Total Outstanding Applications	**81**	**1988 - 2003**

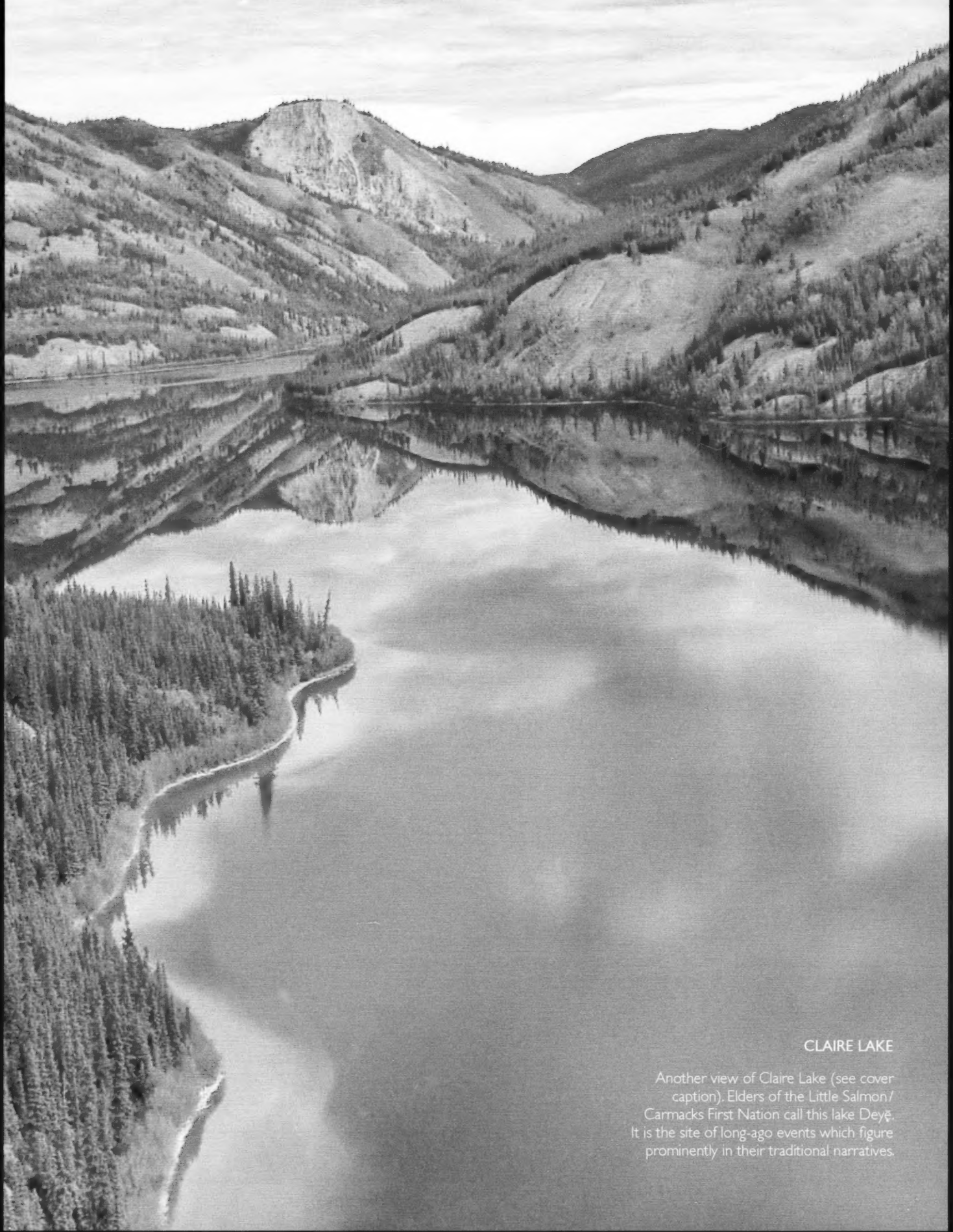
c) Board Secretariat

After many years of service, GV White Resources gave notice to the Board that the company would no longer be serving as its secretariat. In December 2006, the Board recruited a suitable replacement and contracted Deana Lemke of Beyond Words Business Services to provide secretariat services.

Place Names Documentation Project

Since 1996, the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board*, in partnership with the Yukon Native Language Centre, has cost shared a place name photo documentation project that visually records Yukon sites and features. The photographs in this report are examples of place name features visually documented.

All place name photos in this report were taken by Wayne Towriss for the Yukon Native Language Centre and the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board.



CLAIRE LAKE

Another view of Claire Lake (see cover caption). Elders of the Little Salmon/ Carmacks First Nation call this lake Deyę. It is the site of long-ago events which figure prominently in their traditional narratives.

The Board's Web Site

The *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board* web site was launched in January of 2005.

Board members believe the web site is a useful tool for informing the public about Yukon's rich culture and history that is reflected in the place names. As well, the Board believes the web site is an excellent vehicle for describing processes and criteria used to evaluate place name applications.

Additionally, the web site offers viewers the opportunity to observe photographs of Yukon features and to listen to sound files of First Nation elders pronouncing the names of these features in their own language. For example, photographs of *Jekudìtl'eda* (Alligator Lake) and *Nànìdhät* (Old Woman Rock) are illustrated, and sound files of these names in Southern Tutchone and Hän are featured.

To view the Board's web site go to: **www.yukonplacenames.ca**

YGPNB 2007 - 2008

Over the next year the Board will continue to review place name applications. As part of this process, the Board will consult regularly with the Yukon Toponymist to ensure that all applications received are complete and accurate. The Board will also continue to consult with applicants, First Nations, language experts and the public as required to confirm that all documentation is correct before applications are decided. The approved applications will be forwarded to the Minister, who then will make the final decision based on the Board's recommendation.

The Board will continue to work with governments to ensure that approved place name features are included in accordance with map production specifications of Canada on revised maps of the National Topographic System.

YUKON PLACE NAME INFORMATION

Information about Yukon and other Canadian place names can be obtained by consulting the Geographic Names Board of Canada database at:

Geo Names
Natural Resources Canada
Room 634-615 Booth Street
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1A 0E9

www: geonames.nrcan.gc.ca

For information about the Yukon Geographical Place Names process or to obtain a status report on an application submitted contact:

Yukon Toponymist
Cultural Services Branch
Heritage Resources Unit (L-1)
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Canada Y1A 2C6

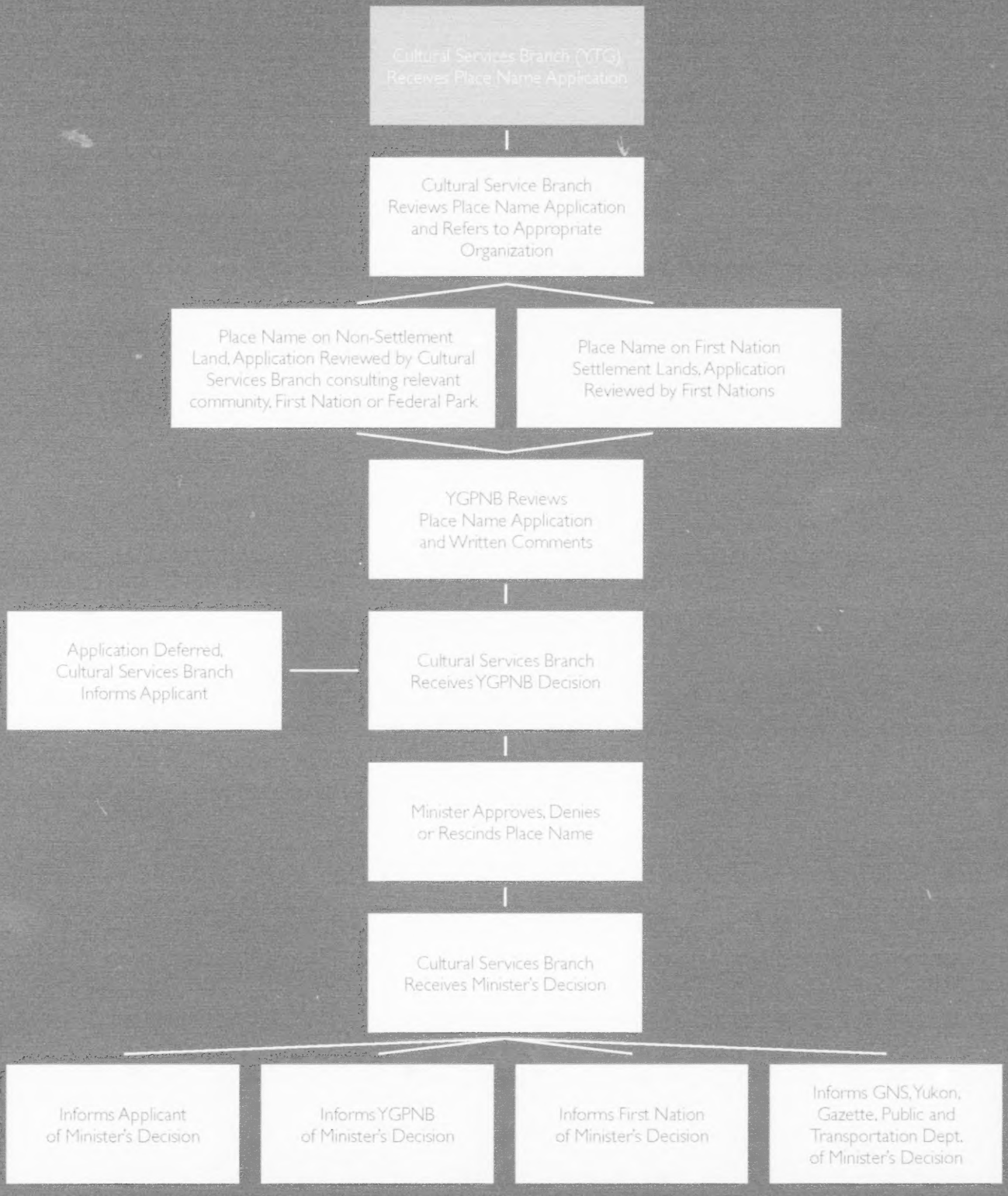
Telephone: (867) 667-3099
Toll-free: (800) 661-0408 (ext. 3099)
Fax: (867) 393-6456
www: yukonheritage.com

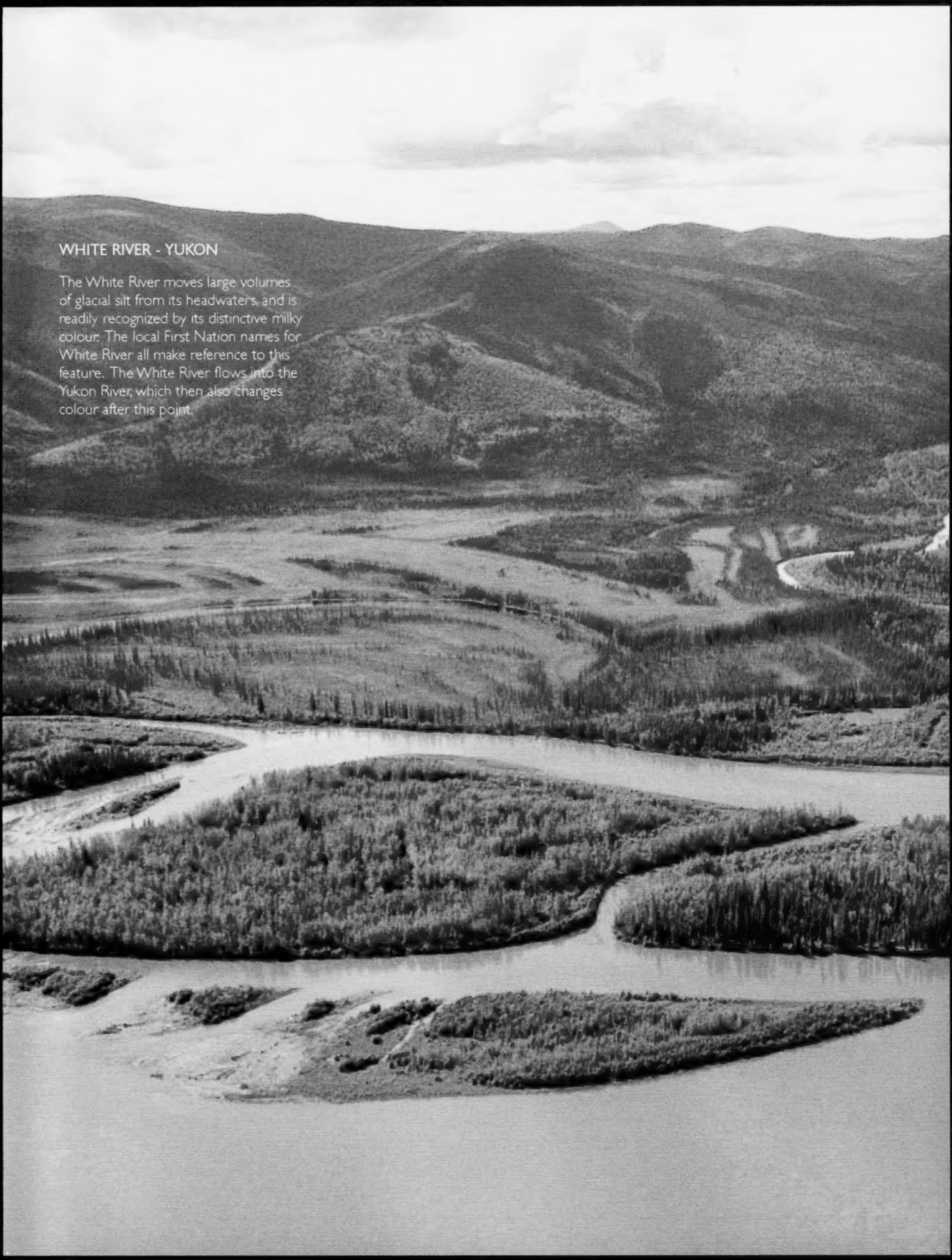
For additional information about the activities and mandate of the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board* please contact:

Secretariat
Yukon Geographical Place Names Board
P.O. Box 31164
Whitehorse, Yukon
Canada Y1A 5P7

Telephone: (867) 393-3982
Fax: (867) 667-7006
Email: yukonplacenames@yknet.ca
www: yukonplacenames.ca

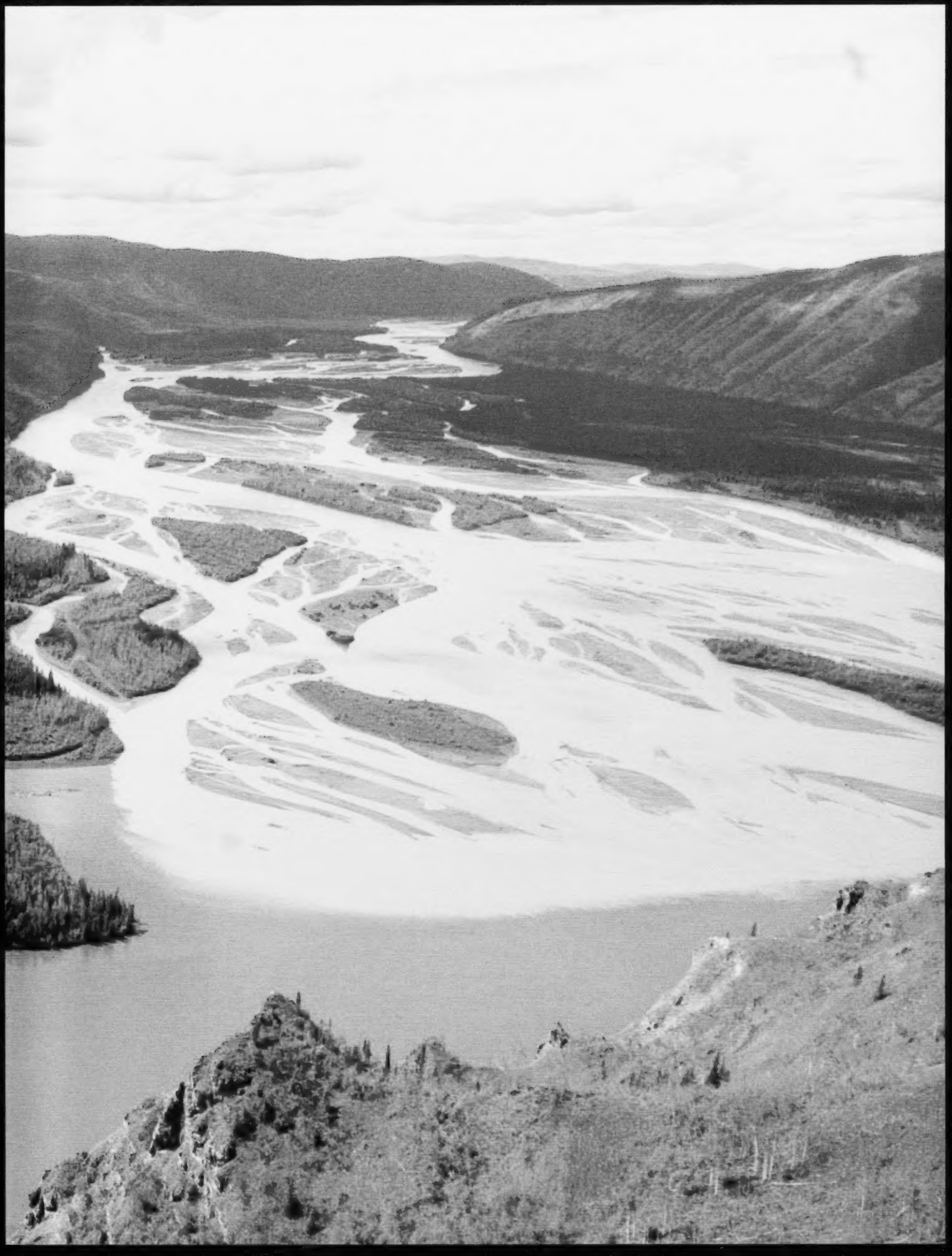
FIGURE 1: GEOGRAPHICAL PLACE NAMES APPLICATION PROCESS FLOW SHEET


Cultural Services Branch (YTG) Receives Place Name Application
Cultural Service Branch Reviews Place Name Application and Refers to Appropriate Organization
Place Name on Non-Settlement Land, Application Reviewed by Cultural Services Branch consulting relevant community, First Nation or Federal Park
Place Name on First Nation Settlement Lands, Application Reviewed by First Nations
YGPNB Reviews Place Name Application and Written Comments
Application Deferred, Cultural Services Branch Informs Applicant
Cultural Services Branch Receives YGPNB Decision
Minister Approves, Denies or Rescinds Place Name
Cultural Services Branch Receives Minister's Decision
Informs Applicant of Minister's Decision
Informs YGPNB of Minister's Decision
Informs First Nation of Minister's Decision
Informs GNS, Yukon, Gazette, Public and Transportation Dept. of Minister's Decision



WHITE RIVER - YUKON

The White River moves large volumes of glacial silt from its headwaters, and is readily recognized by its distinctive milky colour. The local First Nation names for White River all make reference to this feature. The White River flows into the Yukon River, which then also changes colour after this point.



CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

mackay.ca

MacKay LLP

Auditors' Report

To the Board of Directors of
Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

We have audited the statement of financial position of Yukon Geographical Place Names Board as at March 31, 2007 and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Board's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

The financial statements as at March 31, 2006 were not audited. The closing balances of the asset and liability accounts for the March 31, 2006 year enter into the determination of the current year's operations, and accordingly we were unable to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to revenue, expenditures, and excess of revenue over expenditures.

In our opinion, except for the qualification mentioned in the above paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Board as at March 31, 2007 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Whitehorse, Canada

August 7, 2007

MacKay LLP

Chartered Accountants

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31,	2007	2006
Revenues		
Yukon Territorial Government	$ 64,225	$ 63,201
Interest income	1,421	2,079
	65,646	65,280
Expenditures		
Advertising and promotion	1,096	1,109
Annual report	8,245	4,406
Consulting fees	-	563
Documentation	9,908	11,728
Honoraria	2,848	4,719
Insurance	752	745
Interest and bank charges	40	28
Meals and entertainment	-	945
Miscellaneous	-	125
Office	1,162	2,553
Postage and courier	664	698
Professional fees	3,048	2,305
Rent	1,606	-
Repairs and maintenance	-	515
Secretariat	30,642	45,750
Telephone and utilities	1,208	1,163
Travel	410	2,832
Website services	4,925	248
	66,554	80,432
Deficiency of revenues over expenditures	$ (908)	$ (15,152)

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended March 31,	2007	2006
Surplus, beginning of year	$ 117,150	$ 132,302
Deficiency of revenues over expenditures	(908)	(15,152)
Surplus, end of year	$ 116,242	$ 117,150

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Financial Position

March 31,	2007	2006
Assets		
Current		
Cash	$ 62,485	$ 17,167
Accounts receivable	2,072	2,639
Prepaid expenses	115	117
Short-term investment	54,737	103,327
	119,409	123,250
Property and equipment (note 2)	12,001	12,001
	$ 131,410	$ 135,251
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$ 3,167	$ 6,100
Fund Balances		
Investment in Capital Assets	12,001	12,001
Surplus	116,242	117,150
	128,243	129,151
	$ 131,410	$ 135,251

Approved by the Board:

Member

Member

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31,	2007	2006
Cash provided by (used for)		
Operating activities		
Deficiency of revenues over expenditures	$ (908)	$ (15,152)
Change in non-cash working capital items		
Decrease (increase) in accounts receivable	567	(263)
Decrease (increase) in prepaid expenses	2	(5)
Decrease in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(2,933)	(53)
Decrease in cash	(3,272)	(15,473)
Cash, beginning of year	120,494	135,967
Cash, end of year	$ 117,222	$ 120,494
Cash consists of:		
Cash	$ 62,485	$ 17,167
Short-term investment	54,737	103,327
	$ 117,222	$ 120,494

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Notes to the Financial Statements

March 31, 2007

1. Significant accounting policies

The organization is a non-profit entity established under the Umbrella Final Agreement, passed by the Government of Canada and Government of Yukon, to consider and recommend the naming or re-naming of places or features located within the Yukon, to the Yukon Minister of Tourism and Culture.

(a) Property and equipment

Capital Assets are expensed when they are purchased and are recorded on the balance sheet at their historical cost. The net assets invested in the capital assets account represents the historical cost of all capital assets less the principal amount of any debt outstanding on the purchase of the assets.

(b) Financial instruments

All significant financial assets, financial liabilities and equity instruments of the Board are either recognized or disclosed in the financial statements together with available information for a reasonable assessment of future cash flows, interest rate risk and credit risk.

(c) Revenue recognition

Revenue from the contribution agreement with the Yukon Territorial Government is recognized when received or when it is determined to be receivable, whichever comes first and are credited to revenue in the period to which it relates.

2. Property and equipment

			2007	2006
	Cost	**Accumulated amortization**	**Net book value**	Net book value
Furniture and fixtures	**$ 12,001**	**$ -**	**$ 12,001**	$ 12,001

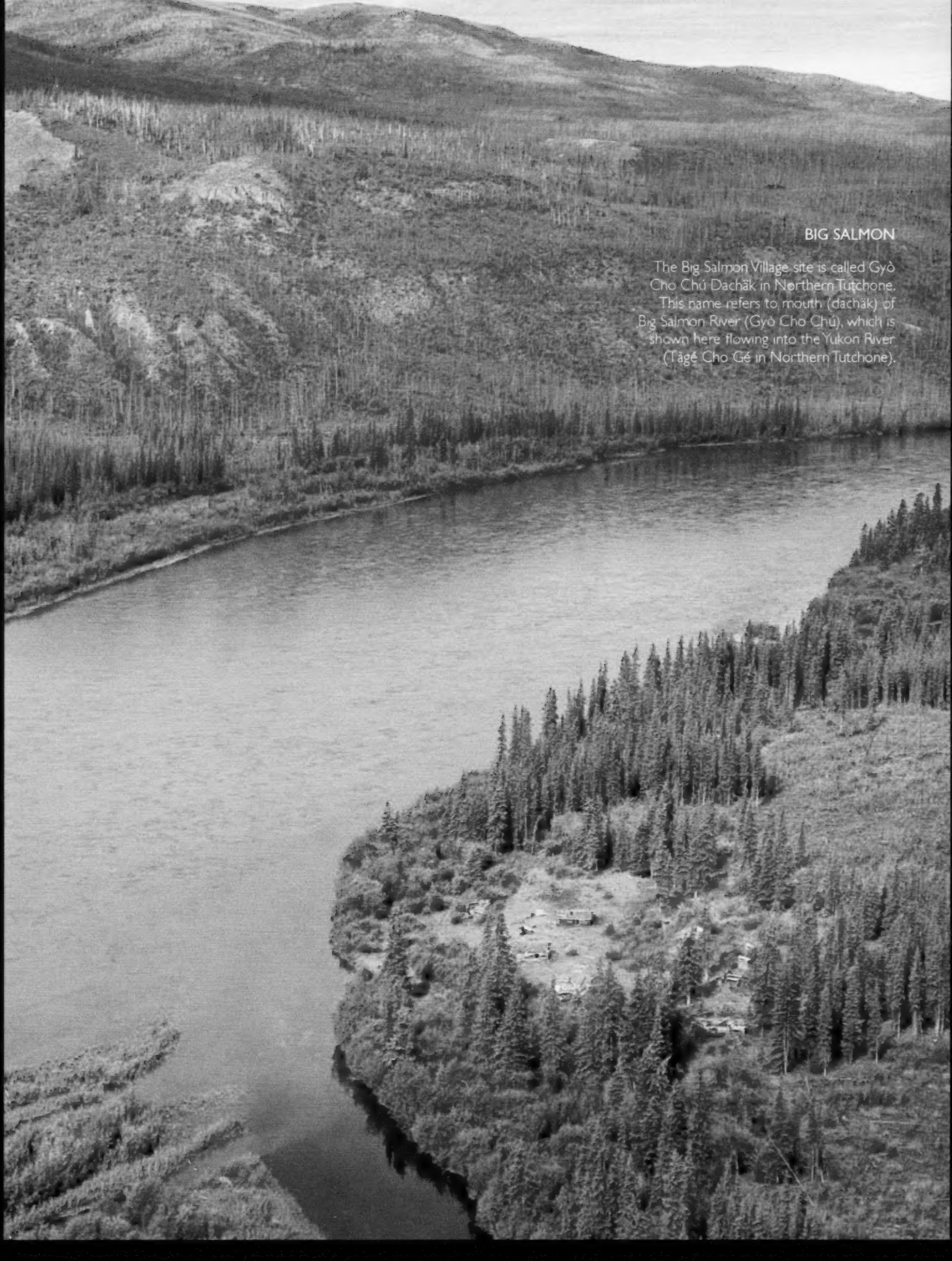
3. Comparative figures

The financial statements have been reclassified, where applicable, to conform to the presentation used in the current year.

The comparative figures were not audited in the prior year and therefore no audit assurance can be given in regards to the comparative figures. See the Auditors Report.

4. Economic dependence

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board is dependent upon government funds for the continuation of its activities.



BIG SALMON

The Big Salmon Village site is called Gyò Cho Chú Dachäk in Northern Tutchone. This name refers to mouth (dachäk) of Big Salmon River (Gyò Cho Chú), which is shown here flowing into the Yukon River (Tägé Cho Gé in Northern Tutchone).

yukonplacenames.ca